

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 20th, 2012 Press Contact: Ryan Nickel (202) 225-3481

**WASHINGTON, D.C., March, 20<sup>th</sup>** - Today, Republicans on the House Budget Committee revealed their FY2013 Budget. House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Norm Dicks made the following statement:

"Last year, Congress was able to finish appropriations bills because of a bipartisan agreement on discretionary spending totals. The Budget Control Act (BCA) established a 10-year plan for appropriations in an effort to reduce deficits. Today, the Republican budget resolution reneges on that agreement, upending the FY 2013 appropriations process before it has a chance to begin and setting the stage for another round of government shutdown brinkmanship in the fall.

"The BCA and the Consolidated Appropriations Act were rare examples of bipartisan cooperation in the previous session, and the latter was a testament to the work-ethic and resolve of the committee. Today, by proposing an amount for discretionary spending considerably lower than what was agreed to, the Republican leadership suggests they may not be planning any more bipartisan cooperation on appropriations."

"It's important to remind my Republican colleagues that the 10-year discretionary allocations were just as hard for Democrats to accept as Republicans. While Republicans wanted a lower cap, we were as concerned then as we are now that draconian cuts to the federal budget risk damaging our fragile economy. Our economy needs a growth strategy that reduces deficits by getting people back to work. Draconian austerity has not worked in Europe and shouldn't be attempted here.

"The result of negotiations was a hard-fought compromise to cap spending at \$1.047 trillion. A majority of the Republican conference in the House voted for the BCA as did one half of the Democratic caucus. Republicans now find it difficult to pass a budget resolution at the BCA level. But an agreement set in law does not become null and void just because it is politically inconvenient.

“The bipartisan agreement provided certainty and confidence to government agencies, financial markets and, most importantly the American people, that Congress can accomplish the most basic tasks required of it. I understand Chairman Rogers and other Republicans on the Appropriations Committee urged their leadership not to undercut that certainty. The Ryan budget resolution, however, undermines confidence that Congress can do its work.

“I urge Republicans to maintain the caps at the level they already agreed to. Unless Republican s reconsider the discretionary allocation, Congress faces further deterioration in confidence. Anything less than the level set by the Budget Control Act is a betrayal of trust and a threat to economic growth and job creation.”

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